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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 000467

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STATE PASS AIT/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/01/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: SEF-ARATS DISCUSS "ONE CHINA" DEADLOCK

REF: A. 01/28/05 AIT-EAP/TC E-MAIL (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. 2004 TAIPEI 3190

Classified By: AIT Director Douglas Paal, Reason: 1.4 (B/D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: PRC State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) Deputy Director Sun Yafu urged Taiwan officials to accept Beijing's offer to use the "1992 consensus" as a basis for renewed dialogue. Sun made the appeal during a one-hour meeting on February 2 with Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) officials in Taipei, where Sun visited in his role as Vice Chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) to attend the funeral of SEF Chairman C.F. Koo. In his meeting with SEF Senior Secretary Patricia Lin, Sun rejected Taipei's suggestion of a more ambiguous reference to the "1992 Hong Kong talks" and a request to send SEF officials to the PRC for further talks. Sun agreed, however, to consider Taipei's proposal for a meeting in a third country to further explore options to break the "One China" deadlock. Sun also promised to convey President Chen Shui-bian's invitation to ARATS Chairman to visit Taiwan. Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) officials are cautiously optimistic over the exchange and say they will seek a response from Beijing over Taipei's proposal for further talks in the coming days. End Summary.

Funeral Diplomacy

[1](#)2. (C) PRC TAO Deputy Director Sun Yafu provided SEF Senior Secretary Patricia Lin (Shu-wen) an explanation of Beijing's

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conditions for restarting a cross-Strait dialogue during an hour-long meeting on February 2 at Taipei's Chiang Kai-shek Airport, according to readout provided to AIT by MAC Senior Secretary Jan Jyh-horng. Sun arrived in Taipei in his role

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as ARATS Vice Chairman to attend memorial services for SEF Chairman C.F. Koo. Sun was accompanied by ARATS Secretary General Li Yafei. Contrary to Taiwan media reports, Jan told AIT that Sun did not engage in substantive discussions with MAC Vice Chairman (and SEF Secretary General) Liu Te-shun during a brief pull aside at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial. Instead, substantive discussions were conducted at the airport VIP lounge between Sun and SEF's Lin, who was assigned to escort the ARATS group under a MAC-ARATS agreement reached on January 28 (Ref A).

[1](#)3. (C) Jan told AIT that after an exchange of pleasantries, Sun asked Lin to convey Beijing's request that Taiwan accept the "1992 consensus" as a basis for restarting cross-Strait political talks. Sun asserted that this position is a major concession from Beijing's perspective, since it would not require Taipei to accept the PRC's "one China principle." Lin, who was authorized to convey Taiwan's formal position, countered by urging Beijing to consider President Chen's October 10 offer of renewed talks based on the framework of the "1992 Hong Kong talks" (Ref B). Sun responded that this would not be acceptable, since the 1992 Hong Kong SEF-ARATS talks failed to produce an agreement on key principles. "The 1992 consensus," Jan quoted Sun as stating, "was concluded only after the Hong Kong talks via an exchange of faxes between SEF and ARATS."

[1](#)4. (C) Lin replied that Taipei did not accept this characterization of events, but requested Beijing's permission to send an SEF delegation to Beijing to explore the issue further. Sun replied that the conditions that allowed SEF-ARATS exchanges in the past no longer exist. According to Jan, Sun said that Beijing only agreed to establish the SEF-ARATS channel because the then-KMT government fully endorsed the 1990 Guidelines on National Unification (Guotong Gangling). Nevertheless, Sun said he would convey Lin's request to hold a private meeting in a third country to discuss options for bridging differences over the "1992 consensus." Jan told AIT that MAC would wait several days before asking for an answer on the issue.

Wang Invitation

[1](#)5. (C) Jan noted that in the "three-minute" pull-aside at the

Sun Yat-sen Memorial, MAC Vice Chairman Liu only had time of convey President Chen's invitation for ARATS Chairman Wang to visit Taiwan. Jan said that Liu offered to send a special plane with medical staff to facilitate Wang's travel. Sun promised to personally convey the invitation to Wang, but noted that the ARATS Chairman's health is rapidly deteriorating.
Atmospherics

16. (C) Jan told AIT that MAC is cautiously optimistic over the February 2 airport exchange. Jan noted that Sun's delegation had been reluctant to have any contact whatsoever with MAC/SEF until the morning of February 2, when they accepted the request for a brief pull-aside on the margins of the funeral ceremonies. Even then, however, Jan said that the atmospherics were uncomfortable. While Sun was warm and friendly, Jan noted, ARATS SecGen Li was gruff and abrasive, refusing to sit down during the meeting, even after Sun did so. Jan said he was pleasantly surprised that Sun was willing to engage SEF's Lin in substantive discussions at the airport, especially in light of Lin's relatively junior protocol rank. He speculated that Sun may have calculated that by waiting until shortly before his departure, Sun could prevent the Taiwan side from exploiting the SEF-ARATS exchange in the media before the Koo funeral.

Comment: A Window of Opportunity?

17. (C) Sun's presence at the Koo funeral has raised expectations that recent momentum from the Lunar New Year charter flights and Jia Qinglin's January 28 speech might be maintained. Sun's delivery of a substantive message and willingness to consider future rounds of discussions are also encouraging signs. Unfortunately the two sides did not discuss more immediate issues such as the PRC's proposed Anti-Secession Law, the main source of potential friction over the coming three months. Nevertheless, if Beijing and Taipei can work out a more formal round of contacts in a third country, it would be a significant step towards re-establishing some sort of dialogue that might help avoid miscalculations over the Anti-Secession Law and other issues.
PAAL